

**“The Captain Michael McGuire Park is a
tribute to McGuire and all the early
Catholics who held true to their faith [...]”**

Heart in Conewago. The Catholic residents of the newly formed McGuire's Settlement yearned for the services of the Church.

To that end, McGuire set aside land for a graveyard, church and support of a resident priest. Bishop John Carroll, the first U.S. Catholic bishop, described the gift as follows, “Capn Michael Maguire, living on the deck (slope) of Alligany, [...] where there are a good many Catholicks, offers 200 acres of very good land and a good horse to a priest, & will himself, subscribe (funds per year).” *

Father Felix Brosius, a visiting priest, later consecrated the donated land. When Captain McGuire died in 1793, he was the first person interred in the cemetery. McGuire's gift to the Church was one of a series of events that established Loretto as an early center of Catholicity in Western Pennsylvania. In 1795, Prince Demetrius Gallitzin, a Russian prince and newly ordained priest, came to McGuire's Settlement on a sick call and was shown the donated land. By 1799, Bishop John Carroll approved Prince Demetrius Gallitzin's request to take possession of McGuire's gift and reside as pastor.

Gallitzin renamed McGuire's Settlement 'Loretto,' supervised the construction of St. Michael's Church (reportedly named in honor of Captain McGuire) and spent his life ministering

to his beloved flock of pioneer Catholics. Captain McGuire's sons, Luke and Richard, served as Church wardens and his widow Rachel's will called Gallitzin her 'dearly beloved friend.' Known as the 'Apostle of the Alleghenies,' Gallitzin is now a candidate for beatification.

The Captain Michael McGuire Memorial Park is a tribute to McGuire and all the early Catholics who held true to their faith in times of difficulty and is a reminder that Catholics today must meet similar challenges.

McGuire Park will provide recreation and education for area residents, visitors, and students. It will include a playground, an amphitheater, picnic facilities, a low-ropes course, several workout stations, a bird blind, and boardwalks that lead into the natural wetlands located on the grounds. Saint Francis University is presently raising funds for the Park's construction. Members interested in supporting this initiative can send a donation to the Capt. Michael McGuire Memorial Park Fund at St. Francis University.

**Hanley, Thomas O'Brien, S.J. The John Carroll Papers, Volume 2. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press., 1976.*

Special Note: Blanche McGuire is a descendant of Capt. Michael McGuire.